

Indiana Trails Advisory Board

December 5, 2013 - 3:00 PM
Fort Harrison State Park Inn
5830 N. Post Road, Indianapolis IN 46216

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:

All Terrain Vehicle Users - Neil McCammack
Bicyclists – Nancy Tibbett
Environmental groups – Kevin Hardie
Four Wheel Drive Users - Ryan Sweany
Hikers – Tim Calahan
Mountain Bikers - Jeff Fetterer
Off-Road Motorcyclists – Roy Garrett (proxy)
Parks & Recreation Agencies – Melody Jones
Pedestrians - Pat Martin
Snowmobilers – David Leinerth (proxy)
Users with Disabilities – Ric Edwards
Water Trail Users - Dan Plath

Members not present:

Equestrians
Higher Education/Health
Trail Support Groups

DNR Staff:

Dale Brier
Leah Kopp

Guests:

Karen Bohn – Greenways Foundation
Marlo Sweany
Jessical Hall – Bicycle Indiana

Welcome

At 3:15 pm Dale Brier welcomed everyone in the absence of both the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman. Dale announced the proxies: Tom Hartman gave his proxy to Roy Garrett and Len Neisler gave his proxy to David Leinerth.

Introductions

Everyone introduced themselves.

Review and Approval of September 2013 Minutes

Roy Garret moved to approve the minutes. Neil McCammack seconded. Motion carried.

Department Report

Dale reported to the group about changes in the grants that had been made since the announcement in June. One had dropped out and one would not need as much money as anticipated. This meant that the Porter County would be fully funded. Nancy Tibbett asked for a revised list to be electronically sent out to all members. A motion was then made to let Dale sign off on all changes; Pat Martin made the motion to give Dale authority, followed by a seconded from Melody Jones. Motion carried. The Trail Training Conference that had been planned was cancelled due to lack of interest, only four people signed up. Melody Jones asked about the amount of money that had been set aside for the Conference and if it would be lost. Dale explained that this was education money and it had never been allocated to Trails Advisory Board (TAB) but to educational projects. Roy Garrett asked if it could be

used for Safety Instructors and Dale said he wasn't sure, but it sounded reasonable. Dale suggested that anyone with a potential project check with Bob Bronson. Karen Bohn asked about funding the Trails Gathering, Dale replied that he is aware that it is being talked about. Melody Jones suggested using the money in different ways statewide.

2014 Appointments

Five positions will be open, and the press releases have gone out. Those that are open include: Environmental Groups, Hikers, Trails Support Groups, Users with Disabilities and All Terrain Vehicles. If you are interested in being reappointed to those positions nominate yourself or have someone nominate you and the nominations have to be in to The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) by January 6, 2014.

Dale brought up the removal of unnecessary positions. It has been done in the past for positions that were outdated or had little interest. Dale brought up the Environmental position. Dale had a spread sheet of all of the meetings since TAB had begun; the above mentioned position has a 43% attendance rate. The makeup of the TAB is ultimately up to the DNR Director, but when positions have been added to or subtracted from the Board they have always come as a recommendation from board itself. He said that the reason he brought it up is that it makes it harder to have a quorum. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided that TAB would not recommend removal of any positions. Per a request, Dale said that he would send out an excel sheet that shows the attendance.

Reimbursement of Travel – Kevin Hardie asked if it was possible to reimburse TAB members for travel. Dale said that there is a portion of the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds that can be used to administer the program; travel for the TAB would fall under that. Dale believes it would be eligible, but needs to talk it over with others in DNR - Outdoor Recreation. Roy asked how it would work; some members live at one end of the state while others live at the other. Dale advised him that members would be reimbursed .44 cents per mile of travel. Dan Plath made the motion to reimburse TAB member for travel because he feels that it would encourage future members to attend the meetings, Roy Garret made the second and the motion carried.

User Group Reports

Dan Plath arrived and ran the meeting from this point forward.

Bicyclists – Nancy Tibbett shared that the National Bike Summit will be held in Washington DC, March 3-5, 2014 and the Indiana Bike Summit will be held in Bloomington, April 25-26, 2014. For those businesses, universities, and communities who would like to be considered Bicycle Friendly Businesses' by the League of American Bicyclists the business deadline is January 16, the university deadline is not until August and the community deadline is February 9, 2014.

Four Wheel Drive Users – Ryan Sweany announced that he doesn't have any numbers yet for Toys for Tots events. Their Badlands event was scheduled for December 7. Their yearly convention will be hosted by the Northwest Indiana Jeep Club in Cold Water, Michigan, March 7-9, 2014.

Off-Road Motorcyclists – Roy Garrett commented that the group had worked at the Hoosier Outdoor Experience and they ran 701 kids through the 50CC motorcycles for the youngsters. They will be doing it again next year. In February, the Motorcycle Expo will be at the State Fair Grounds. They will be having the International Motorcycle Show in February as well.

All Terrain Vehicle Users – Neil McCammack reported that they are working on getting machines lined up for the 2014 Hoosier Outdoor Experience. This year they didn't get enough of them lined up but they are confident that they will be able to have them ready next September. They will have their Miracle Trail Ride in June.

Hikers – Tim Calahan let the group know that he has been hearing more and more about logging operations on trails and the trails not being clearly marked once the operation is complete. Cleanups are not being done on an acceptable level, some logging operations are running longer than the allotted time. Another problem is that when an area of trail is taken out there doesn't seem to be any accommodations made for a reroute around the harvest area. One thing that Tim is curious about is what DNR - Forestry's responsibility in this is because they administer that work. Dale replied that generally when this comes up it involves the Knobstone Trail and maybe a few others but that is the big trail that goes through Forestry property. When they have a timber harvest they do reroutes and some are better than others. More discussion followed and the general consensus was that Tim will need to talk with Dan Ernst in Forestry about some of the problems. Ric Edwards asked if the board would be interested in having someone from Forestry come in and talk about their concerns and Tim agreed it would be a good idea. It was then decided that Ric will talk with Dan Ernst about attending one of the TAB meetings and answering questions about timber harvesting and trails.

Pedestrians – Pat Martin let everyone know that Terre Haute is finishing up on a very successful 2013 "Year of the River Celebration." It has been celebrating art, environment and other activities such as walking, hiking, biking, everything along the river. A new area has been opened up at the Wabashiki Fish and Wildlife area. Pat will be doing a walkability survey for the entire city of Terre Haute in 2014.

Parks and Recreation – Melody Jones was delighted to let everyone know that Indiana Park and Recreation Association held their annual workshop for trails in October in Columbus they had 25 people attend. She also attended the Mid America Trails and Greenways (MATAG) conference in which Dale made a wonderful presentation. Melody had a handout with some of the trail statistics. She also announced that they are going to be able to get the Monon completed through their area by 2015.

Environmental Groups – Kevin Hardie was happy to announce that Hoosier Outdoor Experience paddling activity was well attended. White River State Park hosted a very well attended family day. In September, a multi-area clean up was also held which has yielded some very interesting art projects using discarded beverage containers that were picked up along the riverbank and one of those is on

display at Park Tudor school. The Quiet Sports Expo will also be involved once again in the Boat, Sports and Travel Show in February.

Water Trail Users – Dan Plath talked about what is believed to be the state's first fully ADA compliant kayak launch they will be installing this spring. It has received quite a bit of attention in the area. They are hoping that in the next couple of years that they have at least one ADA accessible point at each of their major waterways. He went on to explain that within the paddling community that many of the paddlers are 60 years old or older.

The Northwest Indiana Paddling Association has finally received a decision from the National Park Service and the Indiana Dunes National Lake Shore to start the environmental assessment.

Mountain Bikers – Jeff Fetterer informed everyone of the very successful Brown County Breakdown they had in September. This is the third straight year that they have raised over \$20,000. In conjunction with that they did a bunch of work because now they are going into Yellowwood instead of the Hoosier National Forest (HNF), because the HNF wanted too much of their proceeds which made it no longer cost effective. The Ft. Ben trails continue to be refined. The continuous problem that he hears about Ft. Ben is the people are having their vehicles broken in to. He knows that the DNR is trying to keep watch of those areas. Work continues at O'Bannon Woods trail, building there is just a slow process. The Versailles trail system is great but there is a whole other section and right now they are just in the process of fund raising.

Pat Martin added that they were designing a 49 acre mountain bike park through the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. It will be a bike, hike, and run type of park.

Snowmobilers – David Leinerth announced that the annual Snow Show would be held December 7 – 8 at the Porter County Expo Center in Valparaiso.

Users with Disabilities – Ric Edwards informed everyone that the Outdoor Regulations have been adopted and were effective July 1, 2013. Other items he discussed were other power mobility device rule, and Google trail mapping.

Announcements – Greenways Foundation Annual Luncheon will take place on February 25th.

Meeting Dates – March 6, 2014 tentatively set for Terre Haute – Pat Martin will talk with park director.

June 26, 2014 - Tim Calahan will host at the restored Sawmill south of Salem.

September 4, 2014 – Dan Plath will host location to be announced.

December 4, 2014 – Indianapolis at Ft. Benjamin Harrison.

Adjournment – Roy Garret made the motion to adjourn with a second from Neil McCammack.